



# News Release

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## IDWR NOT IMPOSING OR PROPOSING WATER USE FEE

For Immediate Release  
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Recent news reports suggesting that the Idaho Department of Water Resources plans to impose a fee for water use are not accurate and have caused unnecessary concern for many Idahoans, the agency said today.

"I want to assure Idahoans that IDWR has no plans to unilaterally propose any type of water use fee, nor does the agency even have the authority to do so," stated IDWR Director Karl J. Dreher. Only the Idaho legislature can impose a fee, by passing a statute which the Governor must approve, Dreher added.

The misinformation grew out of press reports regarding remarks made by Director Dreher to irrigators in the Magic Valley on July 15, which appeared in a Magic Valley newspaper. The remarks were then rewritten, reprinted and broadcast by other news outlets, and unfortunately misrepresented what actually transpired.

Director Dreher's remarks to the irrigators present included a description of the severe budgetary situation faced by IDWR as a result of the economic recession. He also explained how this situation is impacting IDWR's ability to carry out its responsibilities. He then asked that a dialog be opened between IDWR and Idaho's water user community served by our programs.

"The idea was to have the water user community help us determine the degree of services that are absolutely essential and which ones must be maintained." Dreher said

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Equally critical, he told the irrigators, is the need to determine how those essential services can be provided when existing sources of funding fall short as a result of recession.

Only in that narrow context, was one option identified as a possible fee. That option was framed as a question as to whether or not general discussions should begin on whether it might be appropriate and necessary to develop a fee for services provided to the water user community, which could stabilize funding for essential IDWR services.

At no time during the remarks was it stated that IDWR planned to impose the fee or that it should be proposed to the legislature.